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FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO AMMAN BEIRUT CAIRO DAMASCUS
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SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON ASSESSES PROSPECTS FOR
INTERIM AGREEMENTS

1. SUMMARY: IN SPEECH DECEMBER 26 AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY,
FOREIGN MINISTER YIGAL ALLON STATED THAT OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT
OF MIDDLE EAST SITUATION INDICATED REASONABLE PROSPECTS
FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT ON INTERIM AGREEMENT, ALTHOUGH
HE NOTED SERIOUS CONCERN THAT GAP BETWEEN ISRAELI AND
EGYPTIAN DEMANDS MIGHT BE TOO WIDE TO BRIDGE. HE DESCRIBED
EGYPT AS CRITICAL COUNTRY IN ACHIEVING PROGRESS IN THE AREA.
ALLON SAW LITTLE HOPE AT THIS TIME FOR REACHING INTERIM AGREEMENT
WITH SYRIA BECAUSD OF PRECONDITION TO TALKS IMPOSED BY SYRIA.
NEGOTIATIONS ON WEST BANK LIKELY TO CONTINUE AT DEADLOCK
IN NEAR FUTURE AS ISRAEL REJECTS PLO. IN LONGER RUN HE SAW
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HOPE OF SETTLEMENT WITH ELEMENTS IN WEST BANK AND URGED STEPS

BE TAKEN TOWARD ESTABLISHMENT OF SOME FORM OF HOME RULE ON WEST BANK. ALLON CITED TOPICS WHICH IN MEANTIME COULD PROVIDE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN. WHILE PAGING PRIORITY ON SEEKING PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT WITH ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS, ALLON WARNED THAT ISRAEL COULD SUCCESSFULLY RESIST RENEWED ARAB ATTACK. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING IS PRECISE OF MAJOR POINTS MADE BY FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON IN WIDE-RANGING REVIEW OF ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY DELIVERED AT OPENING OF INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON MIDDLE EAST DECEMBER 26 AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY, AT WHICH TWO EMBOFFS WHERE PRESENT.

3. ALLON DESCRIBED PROBLEMS FACING ISRAEL AS MOST DIFFICULT IN ITS HISTORY. BARGAINING POWER OF ARABS NOW AT PEAK DUE TO THEIR LARGE RESERVES OF OIL AND CAPITAL, STRATEGIC LOCATION, AND AUTOMATIC MAJORITY IN WORLD ORGANIZATIONS. MEANWHILE POSITION OF INDUSTRIALIZED DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES WAS AT NADIR DUE TO INTERACTION OF SEPARATIST INTERESTS, LACK OF CLEAR IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVATION, AND FEAR. NEO-ISOLATIONIST FORCES IN US STRENGTHENED BY ECONOMIC CRISIS AS WELL AS TRAUMA OF VIETNAM. COMMUNIST BLOC MEANWHILE ACTS IN PLANNED AND CONCISTENT MANNER, WITH SOVIET UNION ENCOURAGING INTRANSIGENCE OF ARAB STATES.

4. ISRALI POSITION AND OBJECTIVES: ALLON NOTED THAT OCTOBER WAR DEMONSTRATED THAT ARABS CANNOT ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS THROUGH MILITARY ACTION. ISRAEL TODAY IS CONSIDERABLY STRONGER THAN ON EVE OF OCTOBER WAR, AND ARABS WILL SUFFER MORE DECISIVE DEFEAT IF THEY START ANOTHER WAR. CENTRAL GOAL OF ISRAEL IS ACHIEVEMENT OF REAL PEACE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. AS READINESS FOR PEACE NOT SHOWN BY ANY ARAB STATE, ISRAEL'S SECONDARY OBJECTIVES INCLUDE PREVENTION OF WAR, AND IN FAILURE OF THIS, LIMITING WAR TO MINIMUM OF BATTLEFRONTS AND PREVENTING MULTIPLE FRONT FROM BECOMING SIMULTANEOUS ONE. WHILE WAR IS NOT INEVITABLE, THRE IS NO POINT IN BUYING OFF WAR IN NEAR FUTURE AT COST OF CERTAIN WAR UNDER WORSE CONDITION AT LATER DATE. ISRAEL WILL NOT INITIATE WAR BUT IF WAR IS IMPOSED, ISRAEL WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE INITIATIVES, AS DICTATED BY MILITARY NEEDS AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS. WHILE PREFERRING NEGOTIATIONS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IF POSSIBLE, ON OVERALL PEACE AGREEMENT IMMEDIATELY WITH EVERY ARAB STATE, THIS IS NOT CURRENTLY REALISTIC.

5. SYRIA. WHILE SYRIA SAYS SHE WANTS TO NEGOTIATE ON OVERALL SETTLEMENT, ALLON ALLEGED PRECONDITIONS DEMANDED BY DAMASCUS (SUCH AS PRIOR COMMITMENT TO RETURN TO 1949 ARMISTICE LINE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SEPARATE PALESTINIAN STATE HEADED BY PLO) RENDER TALKS IMPOSSIBLE.

6. WEST BANK. IN ACCEPTING VERDICT OF RABAT CONFERENCE, JORDAN RELINQUISHED ITS REPRESENTATION OF PALESTINIANS ON WEST BANK TO PLO, BUT RETAINS LATENT OPTION ON WEST BANK IN DISTANT FUTURE, IF AND WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT. IN NEAR FUTURE JORDAN IS NOT CANDIDATE FOR NEGOTIATION OVER WEST BANK. BECAUE OF ISRAEL'S TOTAL REJECTION OF PLO, TEMPORARY DEADLOCK MAY BE EXPECTED ON WEST BANK NEGOTIATIONS. THIS DEADLOCK MAY BE BROKEN IF AND WHEN PLO IS REDUCED TO ITS PROPER SIZE AND ITS IMPOTENCE BECOMES CLEAR. PARTNERS FOR NEGOTIATION ON WEST BANK MAY BE FOUND AMONG WEST BANK ELEMENTS, PERHAPS WITH TACIT UNDERSTANDING OF JORDAN. GROUNDWORK MAY THEN BE LAID FOR WHAT SOUNDS PREMATURE TODAY--ESTABLISHMENT OF HOME RULE FOR PALESTINIANS IN TERRITORIES ISRAEL WIL RELINQUISH AS INTERIM PHASE LEADING TO FULL PEACE. STEPS FOR CREATING SUCH A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT MAY BE TAKEN IN FIELDS OF EDUCATION, LABOR, AGRICULTURE, ETC.

7. DESPITE DEADLOCK ON WEST BANK, THERE IS SCOPE FOR DIALOGUE WITH JORDAN IN NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF INTERIM AGREEMENT. STATE OF SECURITY ALONG 220 KILOMETER COMMON BORDER IS OF INTERST TO BOTH COUNTRIES, AS WELL AS CERTAIN ECONOMIC PROJECTS, SUCH AS USE OF ISRAEL PORTS ON MEDITERRANEAN. JORDAN, HOWEVER, FOR VARIOUS REASONS MAY NOT WANT TO BE FIRST STATE TO BE PREPARED TO REACH INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL, BUT DOOR SHOULD BE LEFT OPEN.

8. EGYPT. KEY TO FURTHER PROGRESS IN AREA IS HELD BY EGYPT. EGYPTIAN STATEMENTS MAY BE INTERPRETED IN VARIOUS WAYS, BUT IN FINAL ANALYSIS, ISRAEL DOES NOT HAVE AN UNEQUIVOCAL ANSWER OF EGYPTIAN INTENTIONS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALLON WOULD PREFER NEGOTIATIONS FOR OVERALL SETTLEMENT RATHER THAN INTERIM AGREEMENTS. BUT EGYPT IS NOT PREPARED AT THIS TIME FOR TOTAL PEACE SETTLEMENT. ALLON BELIEVED RISKS OF INTERIM AGREEMENT PREFERABLE TO DIPLOMATIC DEADLOCK WHICH WOULD ENTAIL CERTAIN DANGER OF WAR. INTERIM AGREEMENT MUST INVOLVE VARIOUS CONDITIONS INCLUDING MUTUAL CONCESSIONS, RETENTION OF STRONG IDF STRATEGIC POSITIONS, AND EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION OF AGREEMENT. FROM OBJECTIVE POINT OF VIEW BOTH ISRAEL AND EGYPT HAVE INTEREST IN INTERIM AGREEMENT, WHICH WOULD PAVE WAY FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION. WHILE THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THAT FINAL PEACE WILL BE REACHED, PROSPECTS JUSTIFY TAKING THE RISKS.

9. GENEVA CONFERENCE. WHILE ACCEPTING GENEVA CONFERENCE IN PRINCIPLE, ALLON WARNED THAT MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS SUCH AS WOULD TAKE PLACE AT GENEVA WOULD NOT FOSTER SPIRIT OF MODERATION BY ARABS BUT WOULD ENCOURAGE EXTREMIST POSITIONS. MOREOVER ISRAEL WOULD NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATION OF PLO WHICH ARABS MOST LIKELY WOULD DEMAND. SOVIET POSITION IN GENEVA CONFERENCE WOULD BE ONE-SIDED. IDEA OF CONFERENCE MUST BE PRESERVED, BUT IT SHOULD BE CONVENED ONLY AFTER GROUNDWORK THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN PARTIES HAS BEEN LAID FOR CONCLUDING FINAL STAGES OF AGREEMENTS.

10. CONCLUSION. IN ASSESSING PROSPECTS OF NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT, ALLON CONCLUDED THAT OBJECTIVELY IT IS POSSIBLE. MUTUAL INTERESTS EXIST. PHYSICAL CONDITIONS MAKE IT FEASIBLE. SADAT HAS SPOKEN, THOUGH NOT UNEQUIVOCALLY, IN FAVOR OF STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH. COMPLETE PESSIMISM THAT SUCH NEGOTIATIONS ARE UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE SEEMS EXAGGERATED, ALTHOUGH THERE IS ROOM FOR CONCERN THAT GAP BETWEEN ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN DEMANDS MAY PROVE TOO DEEP TO BRIDGE.

11. COMMENT. AS MAJOR ARCHITECT OF GOI'S FOREIGN POLICY, ALLON HAS SOUGHT TO PUT FORWARD MOST CONSTRUCTIVE POSSIBLE ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION FROM ISRAELI VIEWPOINT, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS NEXT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT. HIS THOUGHTS ON DEVELOPING AUTONOMOUS WEST BANK LEADERSHIP, IN OUR JUDGMENT, ACCURATELY REFLECT GOI'S DISCOMFITURE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRYING TO CONJURE UP AN OPPORTUNITY WHICH PROBABLY NO LONGER EXISTS. KEATING UNQUOTE BROWN

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